



Sidney Weinbaum, 1990. From *E&S*, Fall 1991

## **SIDNEY WEINBAUM** (1898-1991)

**INTERVIEWED BY**  
**MARY TERRALL**

**August 15, 20, and 22, 1985**

**ARCHIVES**  
**CALIFORNIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY**  
**Pasadena, California**



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### **Subject area**

Mathematics, chemistry, Communism—United States—1950-1960

### **Abstract**

An interview in August 1985 with Sidney Weinbaum, Caltech PhD (1933), a mathematician who was a research fellow in Linus Pauling's laboratory in the Division of Chemistry and Chemical Engineering in the 1930s and worked from 1946 to 1949 with Pol Duwez at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory. In 1950, Weinbaum was arrested for perjury (regarding his alleged membership in the Communist Party) and for "abetting" Party activities. He was convicted and sentenced to four years in prison. In this interview, he recalls his childhood in the Ukraine; his undergraduate years at Caltech (1922-1924); and his work for Pauling. He recalls various friends in the Caltech community, his interests in chess and music, his political activism. He discusses his war work for Bendix Aviation and Curtiss-Wright Research Laboratory; his return to Pasadena after the war to work for JPL; his interrogation by the FBI; his arrest and trial; the support or lack of it from various friends and Caltech faculty; his life in prison; and his release and subsequent happy life with his second wife, Betty.

## **Administrative information**

### **Access**

The interview is unrestricted.

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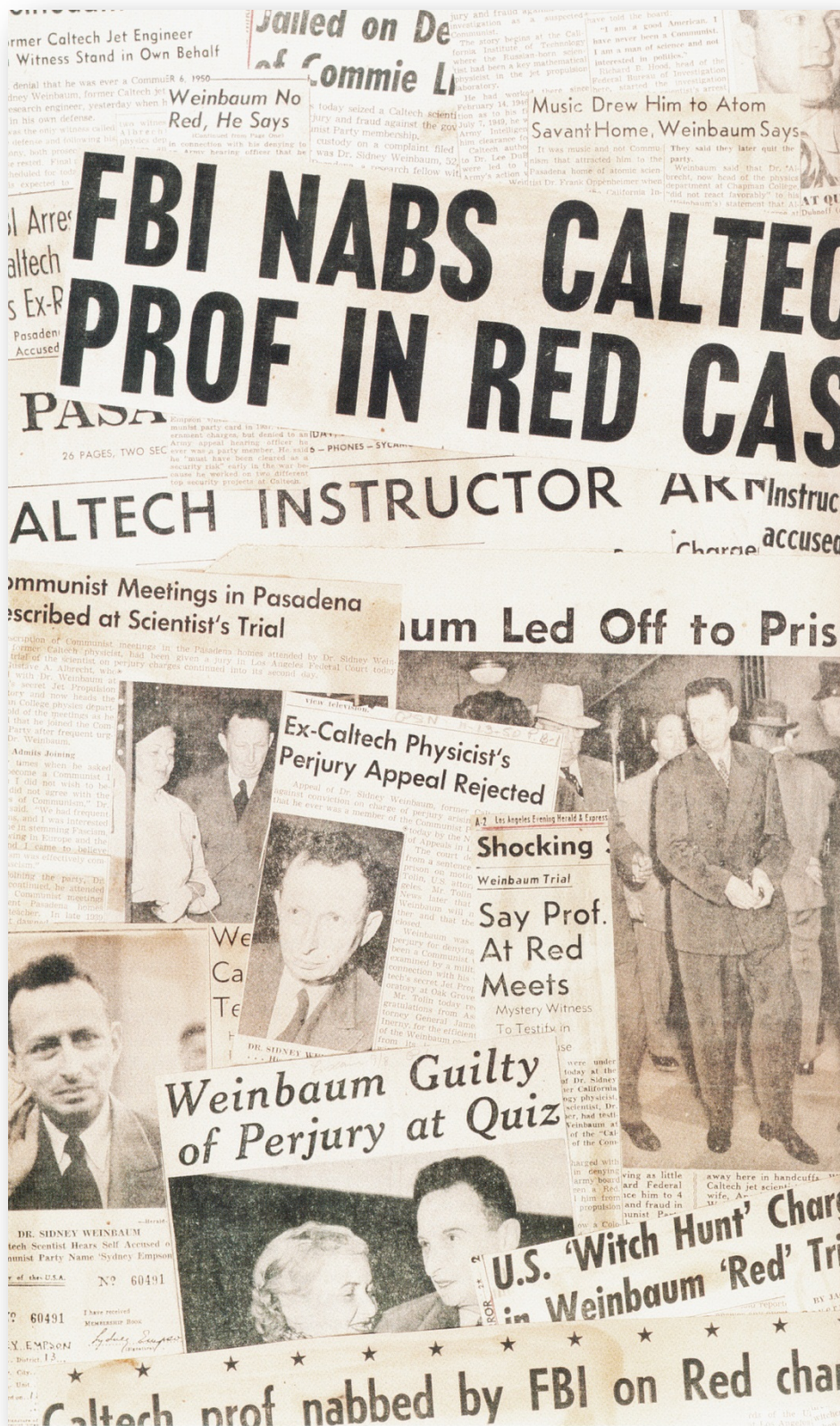
### **Preferred citation**

Weinbaum, Sidney. Interview by Mary Terrall. Pasadena, California, August 15, 20, and 25, 1985. Oral History Project, California Institute of Technology Archives. Retrieved [supply date of retrieval] from the World Wide Web: [http://resolver.caltech.edu/CaltechOH:OH\\_Weinbaum\\_S](http://resolver.caltech.edu/CaltechOH:OH_Weinbaum_S)

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Local newspaper accounts of Weinbaum's arrest and trial. From *Engineering & Science*, Fall 1991